



FAA Airports

Program Guidance Letter 12-09: Eligibility and Justification Requirements for Noise Insulation Projects

Frequently Asked Questions

NOTE: These answers are intended to clarify and explain the Program Guidance Letter and do not supersede the specific language of the guidance.

1. Does this Program Guidance Letter represent a new policy on eligibility for sound insulation projects?

No. The FAA is clarifying our noise policy that has been in place since the mid-1980's and allows Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds to be used to sound insulate homes, schools, and medical buildings. Noise insulation for these structures typically includes windows and doors.

2. What is the purpose of Program Guidance Letter 12-09 AIP Eligibility and Justification Requirements for Noise Insulation Projects?

The Program Guidance Letter (PGL) reiterates the two-step process to determine AIP eligibility for noise insulation projects.

3. What is the two-step process to determine AIP eligibility?

The first step is to determine if the home is within a noise impacted area with an annual average decibel (dB) noise level of 65 or higher, and

The second step is to determine that the interior noise level is at or above 45 dB.

4. Are existing EIS mitigation noise insulation projects covered by this PGL?

Existing EIS noise insulation mitigation projects are subject to the conditions of the Record of Decision for that particular airport development project.

5. Won't this guidance be difficult to implement for the airport sponsors?

The PGL establishes a transition period through September 30, 2014 to align all noise programs with the two-step process.

6. What about commitments that an airport sponsor has already made to the public?

In fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014, the FAA will allow a sponsor to complete the noise insulation of structures already contracted, as planned, if the noise projects meet all federal contract provisions, such as Buy American. Any noise project that is started during the three-year period must be completed prior to September 30, 2015.

7. What about noise insulation Projects that start or cannot be finished until after September 30, 2015?

Projects with ongoing construction after September 30, 2015, must fully meet the AIP requirements, including experiencing pre-insulation interior noise levels at or greater than 45dB.

8. Many homeowners leave their windows open during good weather. Why are you requiring that these homes be tested with windows closed?

The interior noise level must be tested with windows closed to determine if the windows and doors of the residence provide appropriate noise level reduction. This test cannot be done with the windows open.

If a home does not have a continuous positive ventilation system, we cannot expect the homeowner to keep their windows closed all the time. Therefore, if the residence does not need to have its windows and doors replaced, the FAA may be able to fund a ventilation system. An airport sponsor may recommend an air conditioning system in lieu of ventilation only.

9. How is the FAA making sure that the airport sponsors implement the program guidance properly?

The FAA continues to actively work with the airport and consulting communities to address their comments and concerns about the interior noise levels as an eligibility criterion.